

October 28, 2002

**GENERAL PAY INCREASE AND SPECIAL SALARY RATES APPROVED
UNDER TITLE 38 UNITED STATES CODE (U.S.C.) 7455 (RCN 05-0827)**

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE: The purpose of this Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive is to authorize approval of a general pay increase equal to the amount of the basic General Schedule (GS) increase effective January 12, 2003, for employees being paid special rates authorized under Title 38 United States Code (U.S.C.) 7455, when necessary to ensure adequate staffing or competitive pay rates.

2. POLICY: The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy is to authorize a general pay increase equal to the amount of the basic GS increase for employees being paid special salary rates authorized under Title 38 U.S.C. 7455 if the increase is necessary to ensure adequate staffing or competitive pay and local funds are available to support the amount of the adjustment.

3. ACTION

a. Special rates will be increased by the amount of the GS increase unless the facility Director certifies that the existing rates are competitive and an adjustment is not necessary to maintain adequate staffing for the occupation. It is recommended that facility Directors allow pre-decisional involvement by local labor-management partnership councils before reaching a decision not to authorize an increase.

b. To facilitate this annual review, each facility will be provided a summary of the special rate authorizations covered by the annual review. The Workforce Information System Team will distribute the summary to facilities through the Personnel Accounting Integrated Data (PAID) Control Points by November 1, 2002.

c. Signed certifications formatted in the manner shown in Attachment A must be submitted no later than November 29, 2002, to the appropriate Network Director (10N_/051) for coordination and processing. Copies of signed certifications must be faxed to the Human Resources Management (HRM) Programs and Policies Service (051) at 202-273-7607. If a certification that an increase is not necessary is not received in 051 by December 6, 2002, the occupation will receive the GS increase.

d. HRM Programs and Policies staff will contact the facility Human Resources Management Service (HRMS) to confirm receipt of certification that an increase is not necessary. If the facility HRMS contact person has not received confirmation by December 18, 2002, the certification was not received and the occupation will receive the GS increase unless immediate action is taken. Increases granted as a result of certifications received past the deadline may not be rescinded.

e. Advisory assistance on the provisions of this directive may be obtained by contacting the HRM Programs and Policies Service representative handling special salary rates for your facility.

THIS VHA DIRECTIVE EXPIRES JANUARY 10, 2004

VHA DIRECTIVE 2002-066
October 28, 2002

4. REFERENCES

- a. Title 38 U.S.C. 7455.
- b. VA Handbook 5007, Part VI, Chapter 6, Paragraphs 2 and 3.

5. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY: The Office of Human Resources Management (051) is responsible for the contents of this directive.

6. EXPIRATION DATE: This VHA directive expires January 10, 2004.

Robert H. Roswell, M.D.
Under Secretary for Health

Attachment

DISTRIBUTION: CO: E-mailed 10/29/02
FLD: VISN, MA, DO, OC, OCRO, and 200 – E-mailed 10/29/02

ATTACHMENT A

SAMPLE

I certify that existing special rates are competitive and an increase equivalent to the general schedule increase is not necessary to maintain adequate staffing.

Occupation

Reason

Medical Technologist, GS-644

Current rates are competitive with non-Federal health care facilities.

Signature of Certifying Official: _____
(Medical Center Director)

Facility: (Enter facility name and station number)

Human Resources Management Service Contact Person: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Date: _____